

A PLAN TO ESTABLISH AN INDEPENDENT AGENCY  
FOR SOCIAL SECURITY

A study prepared for the Committee on Ways and Means, United States  
House of Representatives and the Committee on Finance,  
United States Senate, pursuant to P.L. 98-21

by the

Congressional Panel on Social Security Organization

June 12, 1984

CONGRESSIONAL PANEL ON SOCIAL SECURITY ORGANIZATION

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CONGRESSIONAL PANEL  
ON SOCIAL SECURITY ORGANIZATION

ELMER B. STAATS, CHAIRMAN  
MARTHA DERTMICK, PANEL MEMBER  
ARTHUR E. NESS, PANEL MEMBER  
P. ROYAL SHIPP, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

June 12, 1984

The Honorable Dan Rostenkowski  
Chairman, Committee on Ways and Means  
House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Mr. Chairman:

The Social Security Amendments of 1983, P.L. 98-21, established a joint study panel under the authority of your committee and the Committee on Finance of the United States Senate to undertake a "thorough study with respect to the implementation of removing the Social Security Administration from the Department of Health and Human Services and establishing it as an independent agency in the executive branch with its own independent administrative structure, including the possibility of such a structure headed by a board appointed by the President, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate.\*\*

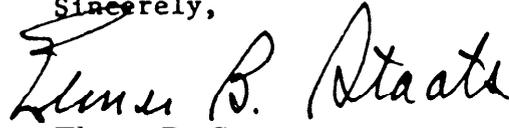
The law directed the Panel to address, analyze, and report on 1) the manner in which the transition to an independent agency would be conducted, 2) the authorities which would have to be transferred or amended in such a transition, 3) the program or programs which would be included in the new agency, 4) the legal and other relationships of the new agency with other organizations, and 5) any other details which may be necessary for the development of appropriate legislation to establish the Social Security Administration as an independent agency.

Pursuant to this mandate, the Panel hereby transmits its Report of the findings of our study, including our recommendations for the program responsibilities, administrative structure and the management authorities most appropriate for an independent Social Security Administration. The Report also includes a suggested transition plan and a draft bill implementing our recommendations.

We would like to thank the Committee for its support of the Panel's work.

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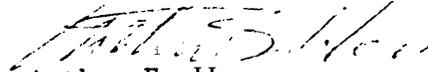
Sincerely,



Elmer B. Staats,  
Chairman



Martha Derthick,  
Member



Arthur E. Hess,  
Member

Enclosure

CONGRESSIONAL PANEL  
ON SOCIAL SECURITY ORGANIZATION

ELMER B STAATS, CHAIRMAN  
MARTHA DERTHICK, PANEL MEMBER  
ARTHUR E. HESS, PANEL MEMBER  
P. ROYAL SHIPP, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

June 12, 1984

The Honorable Robert Dole  
Chairman, Committee on Finance  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Mr. Chairman:

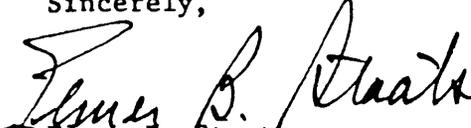
The Social Security Amendments of 1983, P.L. 98-21, established a joint study panel under the authority of your committee and the Committee on Ways and Means of the House of Representatives to undertake a "thorough study with respect to the implementation of removing the Social Security Administration from the Department of Health and Human Services and establishing it as an independent agency in the executive branch with its own independent administrative structure, including the possibility of such a structure headed by a board appointed by the President, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate."

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Eimer B. Staats,  
Chairman

  
Martha Derthick,  
Member

  
Arthur E. Hess,  
Member

Enclosure

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## PREFACE

The Congressional Panel on Social Security Organization was established by Public Law 98-21, the Social Security Amendments of 1983. The Panel was directed to undertake a 'thorough study with respect to the implementation of removing the Social Security Administration from the Department of Health and Human Services and establishing it as an independent agency in the executive branch with its own independent administrative structure, including the possibility of such a structure headed by a board appointed by the President, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate.'\* (Appendix A includes the section of P.L. 98-21 that mandates the Panel's study. It also includes an excerpt from the Conference Report and excerpts discussing the Social Security Administration as an independent agency from two recent national commissions set up to study social security.)

P.L. 98-21 directed the Panel to report the findings of its study, together with any recommendations it considers appropriate, to the Committee on Ways and Means and to the Committee on Finance. In addition, the authorizing amendments specified that the Panel's study should consider:

- the manner in which the transition to an independent agency would be conducted;
- the authorities which would have to be transferred or amended in such a transition;
- the program or programs which would be included within the jurisdiction of the new agency;
- the legal and other relationships with other organizations which would be required of an independent social security agency; and

- any other details necessary for the development of legislation setting up an independent agency.

While the House-passed version of the **1983** amendments called for a study of the *'feasibility'* of an independent agency, the Senate version and the final bill specified clearly that the Panel's study should concentrate on *"implementation"* of an independent social security agency.

Consistent with the instructions of the law, the Panel has not weighed the merits of independence for the Social Security Administration as compared to its continued presence in the Department of Health and Human Services. Though the Panel's recommendations presume independence, they should not be interpreted as an endorsement of it. Nor does the Panel endorse retention within the Department of Health and Human Services.